Studia Antiqua

A Student Journal for the Study of the Ancient World

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Brigham Young University

STUDIA ANTIQUA
CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

All abbreviations are taken from *The SBL Handbook of Style*, 8.4.

AASF	Annales Academiae scientiarum fennicae
AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	*Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York, 1992.
AJP	*American Journal of Philology*
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
ArOr	*Archiv Orientální*
BA	*Biblical Archaeologist*
BBR	*Bulletin for Biblical Research*
BDAG	Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago, 1999.
BDB	Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford, 1907.
BMes	Bibliotheca mesopotamica
BSac	*Bibliotheca sacra*
BSC	Bible Student's Commentary
BT	*The Bible Translator*
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CDME	*A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*. Edited by R. O. Faulkner. Oxford, 1962.
COS	*The Context of Scripture*. Edited by W. W. Hallo. 3 vols. Leiden, 1997–.
DDD	*Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*. Edited by K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, and P. W. van der Horst. Leiden, 1995.
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
EBib	Etudes bibliques
EDNT	*Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by H. Balz, G. Schneider. Grand Rapids, 1990–93.
EgT	*Eglise et théologie*
ExpTim	*Expository Times*
HBC	*Harper's Biblical Commentary.* Edited by J. L. Mays et al. San Francisco, 1988.
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
IB	*Interpreter's Bible*. Edited by G. A. Buttrick et al. 12 vols. New York, 1951–57.
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IDB	*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by G. A. Buttrick. 4 vols. Nashville, 1962.
Int	*Interpretation*
IOS	*Israel Oriental Studies*
JAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JCS	*Journal of Cuneiform Studies*
JFSR	*Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*
JHS	*Journal of Hellenic Studies*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JRS	*Journal of Roman Studies*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*

JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., R. Scott, H. S. Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford, 1996.
MDB	*Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by W. E. Mills. Macon, 1990.
NewDocs	*New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity*. Edited by G. H. R. Horsley and S. Llewelyn. North Ryde, N. S.W., 1981–.
NIB	*The New Interpreter's Bible*
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
OTS	Old Testament Studies
OtSt	*Oudtestamentische Studiën*
SHANE	Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East
SP	Sacra pagina
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, 1964–76.
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
VC	*Vigiliae christianae*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZDPV	*Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins*

EDITOR'S PREFACE

This issue marks my last working as editor for *Studia Antiqua*. It has been a rewarding experience, and it would not have been possible without the guidance and help of the faculty and staff of Brigham Young University. I hope that I have served satisfactorily as the student editor over the past year, and I look forward to watching the continuation of the journal under its new editor.

This issue features three articles from Brigham Young University students. The articles span a variety of topics in New Testament studies and Hebrew lexicology, yet are unified in their application of word study. These pieces are the result of the annual essay contest held by Students of the Ancient Near East and *Studia Antiqua*. The three winners of the essay contest are the articles featured in this issue. They represent some of the finest work of Brigham Young University's undergraduates.

Our first-place winner this year is Andy Mickelsen, whose essay covers the Lukan infancy narratives. He analyzes the usage of the word καταλύμα within the corpus of Greek texts to bring new meaning to the word in the context of Luke's infancy narrative. Our second-place winner is Juan Pinto, who explores the lexicographical history of the word ברא in order to identify trends in the definition's evolution. Finally, Stuart Bevan rounds out this issue with his third-place article exploring the uses of προσκυνέω in the Synoptic Gospels.

As always, this issue would not have been possible without the generous contributions from our esteemed faculty. A double-blind peer reviewed journal takes a toll on the faculty reviewers, but I am grateful for their gracious and enthusiastic assistance. My deep thanks to all of them and apologies if I have overstepped my bounds or sent one too many reminders. This journal recognizes its indebtedness to our wonderful faculty.

Also, we are continually grateful to our financial donors for their continued support. Again, without them, this journal—this opportunity for undergraduates to gain publishing experience—would not be possible.

Jasmin Gimenez
Editor in Chief, *Studia Antiqua*

AN IMPROBABLE INN: TEXTS AND TRADITION SURROUNDING LUKE 2:7

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Introduction

Few scenes from scripture are drenched in as much tradition as the nativity of Jesus. Both ancient and modern Christian audiences have been fascinated with the circumstances of Jesus's birth. This interest has expressed itself in many forms throughout the ages: additional infancy narratives like the *Protoevangelium of James* (beginning in the second century), artistic depictions of the manger scene (beginning in the fourth century), reenactments of the nativity story (first documented in the thirteenth century), and even modern film depictions of the event. These expressions of piety enrich Christian worship and help impress upon believers the wonder of the nativity, particularly during the liturgically significant Christmas season.

Yet these various depictions of Jesus's birth all carry with them the baggage of embellishment. Even if one draws on both the Matthean and Lucan accounts, there are precious few canonical details about Jesus's birth: Matthew's infancy narrative passes over the birth entirely, and Luke's only hint is that a manger is present. Thus, to create even a basic depiction of Jesus's birth, artists are forced to supply details that are absent from the canonical sources. Unfortunately, so many of these additional details have accumulated over the years that the original accounts of the nativity have been obscured by tradition. Even while looking at the biblical text itself, a modern reader's perception of the account is colored by nearly two millennia of interpretation.[1]

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1. Kenneth Bailey describes the problem in this way: "The more familiar we are with a biblical story, the more difficult it is to view it outside the way it has always been understood. And the longer imprecision in the tradition remains unchallenged, the deeper it becomes embedded in Christian consciousness. The birth story of Jesus is such a story." Kenneth Bailey, *Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 25.

One area in which tradition has perhaps obscured the original narrative is the interpretation of Luke 2:7. This verse, the only real account of Jesus's birth in the New Testament (besides the passing mention in Matthew 1:25), is surprising in its brevity. Luke[2] merely records the following: "ἔτεκεν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς τὸν πρωτότοκον· καὶ ἐσπαργάνωσεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἀνέκλινεν αὐτὸν ἐν φάτνῃ, διότι οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τόπος ἐν τῷ καταλύματι." "And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn" (NRSV). Many assumptions have been made about this verse that go beyond the text itself: the mention of a manger has led many to suppose that Jesus's birth took place in a stable surrounded by animals, and the mention of an "inn" has inspired the addition of a cold-hearted innkeeper to many nativity reenactments.

But not only is the insertion of an innkeeper a dubious addition to the text, the presence of an "inn" in the narrative at all is a matter of debate. The Greek term traditionally translated as "inn" here, καταλύματι, is an inflected form of the word κατάλυμα. Here, the term is rendered by most English translations as "inn"—yet when the same term occurs in Luke 22:11, the term is translated as "guest room." Furthermore, when κατάλυμα occurs in other Greek texts from the Hellenistic and Roman eras, it is translated in a variety of ways (as will be examined below). In the last several decades many scholars have pointed out the broad sense of κατάλυμα, and yet a clear majority of biblical translations continue to use the traditional "inn."[3] Other translations contend that terms like "guest room,"[4] "guest chamber,"[5] "guest quarters,"[6] "living-quarters,"[7] "lodging place,"[8] "lodging,"[9] "house for strangers,"[10] or "place where people stay for the night"[11] better encapsulate what Luke was trying to communicate.

This debate is not an insignificant one: the meaning of κατάλυμα is critical for determining how Luke meant to portray the circumstances of Jesus's birth. As mentioned before, the actual location of Jesus's delivery goes unmentioned

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2. Examining questions of authorship for the Gospel of Luke is beyond the scope of this paper. For convenience, "Luke" is used here to refer to the author (or authors) of the gospel bearing his name.

3. Of the 50 English translations of the verse available on the popular Bible Gateway website (biblegateway.com), 36 of them (72%) render καταλύματι as "inn."

4. Common English Bible (CEB), Easy-to-Read Version (ERV), New International Version (NIV), New International Version—UK (NIVUK).

5. Young's Literal Translation (YLT).

6. International Standard Version (ISV).

7. Contemporary English Bible (CEB).

8. Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB).

9. New Living Translation (NLT).

10. Worldwide English (WE).

11. New Life Version (NLV).

in the text: besides the presence of a manger, the only clue we have for deducing the setting of the birth is what Luke implied by saying, "οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τόπος ἐν τῷ καταλύματι." Did Luke intend to portray the young family being rejected from a commercial inn and forced to give birth in a stable? Or is κατάλυμα used in a different sense here, implying something else? Although this is a minor detail in the Lucan infancy narrative, it bears some significance: not only does it help us better understand how early Christians believed Jesus was born, but it is important for understanding the message Luke wished to send in the "prologue" to his broader work.

In this article, I will seek to establish the scene Luke intended to convey in Luke 2:7. To do this, I will first examine how κατάλυμα is used in literature that may have been familiar to Luke: Greek works of the Hellenistic and early Roman periods. This context shows that the term κατάλυμα has a broad range of referents and should not be rendered in translations as something more specific than what the term denotes. I will then closely examine the context in which Luke uses κατάλυμα, in order to determine which meaning of the word is most likely implied in Luke 2. Although its context does not allow us to definitively state how κατάλυμα should be understood, I argue that the word should be understood in Luke 2:7 as referring to a room for guests. I will then explore what such a translation implies for the story and the overall infancy narrative.

The Meaning of κατάλυμα

καταλύματι is the dative singular form of the third-declension noun κατάλυμα. The noun is tied to the verb καταλύω, which often had the meaning "to unbind" or "to loose," and eventually gained the connotation of unharnessing pack animals when resting or lodging on a journey.[12] To better explicate the range of interpretations κατάλυμα may have here, I will first analyze how the term is used in Greek literature from the Hellenistic and Roman periods, then examine how the term is used in the Septuagint, and lastly scrutinize how the term is used in New Testament writings. Each of these contexts is crucial for establishing how Luke would have employed κατάλυμα in his infancy narrative.

Hellenistic Greek Usage

κατάλυμα is not used frequently by Greek writers in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, but the few instances in which it is used give us a sense of how Luke may have encountered the term in literature during his time period. In

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12.   Walter Bauer, "καταλύω," BDAG 414.

these works κατάλυμα generally refers to a person's quarters or lodgings; these accommodations were often temporary in nature.

The term is first used by Polybius in his second-century BCE *Histories*. Polybius mentions that Hasdrubal, a Carthaginian military leader and governor of Punic Spain, "ἐτελεύτησεδολοφονηθεὶς ἐν τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ καταλύμασι νυκτὸς ὑπό τινος Κελτοῦ τὸ γένος ἰδίων ἕνεκεν ἀδικημάτων" "was assassinated at night in his lodging by a certain Celt owing to wrongs of a private nature."[13] The Paton translation of the text renders καταλύμασι with the ambiguous "lodging," but the context gives some insight into what the term means. Polybius does not seem to infer that Hasdrubal was campaigning or traveling at the time of his assassination, and the logical assumption is that he was murdered at his residence in Spanish Carthage.[14] This begs the question of why Polybius used κατάλυμα for the governor's quarters when he had a variety of other possible terms to use. Certainly Hasdrubal was not staying in an inn or other temporary accommodations: Polybius states that he had been governing Spanish Carthage for eight years. It is possible that Polybius used the term as an acknowledgement that although Hasdrubal was residing in Spain, his true 'home' was Carthage in Libya, and thus his quarters in Spanish Carthage, in a sense, lodgings away from home.[15] Thus, κατάλυμα here could be defined as a semi-permanent residence.

Polybius also uses the term when discussing the report of Roman legates after a diplomatic mission to Illyria. The Dalmatians had been hostile hosts: the Romans reported to the Senate "πρὸς δὲ τούτοις διεσάφουν μή<τε>κατάλυμα δοθῆναι σφίσι μήτε παροχήν" "that they had neither been given a residence nor supplied with food" during their time in the country—an offense so grave that the Senate used it as a pretext for declaring war.[16] In this context, κατάλυμα clearly refers to a temporary place for guests or travelers to stay: the Romans were offended at not having been offered some sort of housing during their visit.

This meaning of "guest-housing," particularly in a government context, is also implicit in Diodorus Siculus's use of κατάλυμα in his first-century BCE *Library of History*. He first uses the term when discussing the service which Timasitheus, a Liparaean general, rendered to a group of Roman ambassadors.

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13. Polybius, *Histories* 2.36.1 (Paton, LCL).
14. Stephen C. Carlson, "The Accommodations of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem: κατάλυμα in Luke 2:7," *NTS* 56:3 (2010), 332.
15. This could be compared to an ambassador living in a foreign country: although she or he might live in a home for decades in a different country, that place is not definitively their "home."
16. Polybius, *Histories* 32.13.2 (Paton, LCL).

The Romans were conveying a golden vessel to Delphi when they were captured by pirates, only to be rescued by Timasitheus's timely intervention. When the citizens of Rome learned of the event, they "παραχρῆμα αὐτὸν ἐτίμησε δημόσιον δοὺς κατάλυμα" "honored him at once by conferring the right to public hospitality."[17] It is not entirely clear what "public hospitality" exactly entailed (particularly for a Liparaean general living in Carthaginian territory), but it seems evident that Rome offered Timasitheus state-funded accommodations. Later, Diodorus Siculus also recounts the story of Battaces, a Phrygian priest "of the Great Mother of the Gods" who came to Rome and demanded that the state perform rites to restore the goddess's ritual purity. His persuasive oratory ensured that "καταλύματος μὲν δημοσίου καὶ ξενίων ἠξιώθη" "he was granted lodging and hospitality at the expense of the state."[18] Once again, the implication is that κατάλυμα refers to accommodations for a visitor.

κατάλυμα is used twice more by Diodorus Siculus, although with slightly different meanings. He notes that king Ptolemy, while visiting Rome in the guise of a commoner, discovered the residence of Demetrius the topographer and stayed with him ("πεπυσμένος δὲ κατὰ τὴν πορείαν τὸ κατάλυμα τὸ τοῦ Δημητρίου τοῦτο πογράφου, πρὸς τοῦτον ζητήσας κατέλυσε πεφιλοξενημένον").[19] Diodorus mentions that Demetrius was renting his cramped κατάλυμα for a hefty sum, conjuring the image of an apartment-like space. It is perhaps because the housing is rented space (and thus nominally temporary) that Diodorus uses κατάλυμα to describe it, as opposed to one of the terms traditionally used to describe a person's home. He also uses the term while describing the capture of Manius Aquillius by a group of Lesbians. While he was staying in Mytilene for medical treatment, "ἐπιλέξαντες οὖν τῶν νέων τοὺς ἀλκῇ διαφέροντας ἔπεμψαν ἐπὶ τὸ κατάλυμα" "they sent to his lodgings some youths, chosen for their strength, who all rushed inside the house."[20] The sense of temporary housing or traveler's accommodations is once again present in this usage.

One other Hellenistic author uses κατάλυμα in a significant way. In the *Letter of Aristeas*, a group of seventy-two Jewish elders travel to Egypt in order to create a Greek translation of the Hebrew Torah. Ptolemy II, duly impressed with the wise scholars, "ἐκέλευσε καταλύματα δοθῆναι τὰ κάλλιστα πλησίον τῆς ἄκρας αὐτοῖς" "gave orders that the best quarters near the citadel should be assigned to them."[21] Here καταλύματα unmistakably means guest chambers

17. Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 14.93.5 (Oldfather, LCL).
18. Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 36.13.2 (Walton, LCL).
19. Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 31.18.2 (Walton, LCL).
20. Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 37.27.1 (Walton, LCL).
21. *Letter of Aristeas* 181 (NRSV).

provided by the king; the term is once again being used in the context of accommodating visitors.

Septuagint Usage

Another important corpus of texts which provides context for Luke's writings are the books of the Septuagint. While the classical texts mentioned above contributed to the literary milieu in which Luke wrote, it is unknown whether Luke ever interacted with these writings. On the other hand, it is clear that Luke was familiar with the Septuagint: not only does he quote from it, but in certain places he also appears to imitate its style.²² Thus, it is possible that he was familiar with how the Septuagint employs κατάλυμα and that he used it similarly in his writing. There are a significant number of verses in the Septuagint which mention a κατάλυμα: the noun occurs over a dozen times and in various books. While some verses use the term in ways similar to the sources previously examined, many give it different meanings entirely, further broadening the sense of the word.

κατάλυμα is first used in Exod 4:24: as Moses and his family travel from Midian to Egypt, "ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἐν τῷ καταλύματι συνήντησεν αὐτῷ ἄγγελος κυρίου καὶ ἐζήτει αὐτὸν ἀποκτεῖναι" "on the way at the lodging, an angel of the Lord met him and was seeking to kill him."²³ There are no specifics about this κατάλυμα: all we know is that it is where Moses stayed while traveling in "the wilderness". While an inn-like structure may be inferred here, another possibility is simply a tent, or a natural shelter where Moses and his family spent the night. Indeed, many verses give κατάλυμα the sense of being a "traveler's shelter." While on a pilgrimage to Shiloh, Hannah receives an answer to her prayer at the tabernacle and then "ἐπορεύθη ἡ γυνὴ εἰς τὴν ὁδὸν αὐτῆς καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸ κατάλυμα αὐτῆς καὶ ἔφαγεν μετὰ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς καὶ ἔπιεν" "went on her way and entered her quarters and ate and drank with her husband" (1 Reigns 1:18). Because Hannah and her husband were in Shiloh as pilgrims, the κατάλυμα was likely some sort of temporary accommodations.²⁴

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22. For a list of the most common "Septuagintisms" in Luke, see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (I–IX)* (AB 28; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981), 114–16.

23. All English translations in this section come from Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, eds., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

24. Raymond Brown notes that this verse in particular is significant in establishing context for Luke, since the story of Hannah "is certainly part of Luke's background in the infancy narrative." Raymond Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. New Updated Edition* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1993), 671.

Several verses in the Septuagint place κατάλυμα in parallel constructions with tents. In a revelation to Nathan, the Lord states that during Israel's wanderings in the wilderness "ἤμην ἐμπεριπατῶν ἐν καταλύματι καὶ ἐν σκηνῇ" "I was moving about in a temporary abode and in a tent" (2 Reigns 7:6)—or as the parallel account in 1 Supplements 17:5 puts it, "ἤμην ἐν σκηνῇ καὶ ἐν καταλύματι" "I was in a tent and in a lodging." Sir 14:25 declares that one who meditates on wisdom "στήσει τὴν σκηνὴν αὐτοῦ κατὰ χεῖρας αὐτῆς καὶ καταλύσει ἐν καταλύματι ἀγαθῶν" "will set his tent according to her hand, and he will lodge in a lodging place of good things." All of these verses give κατάλυμα the sense of a place for travelers to stay. Their mention of κατάλυμα in conjunction with tents gives the term an added nuance: it may suggest that κατάλυμα can refer to accommodations as transitory as a tent.

Other verses in the Septuagint use κατάλυμα in yet different ways. The song of Moses in Exod 15:13 exclaims that the Lord led his redeemed "τῇ ἰσχύι σου εἰς κατάλυμα ἅγιόν σου" "by your power into your holy abode." This may be an anachronistic reference to the tabernacle or temple; it may also just refer to the temporary home the Lord provided for Israel in the wilderness. Jer 14:8 records a lament that the Lord has become "ὡσεὶ πάροικος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ὡς αὐτόχθων ἐκκλίνων εἰς κατάλυμα" "like a resident alien in the land and like an indigenous person turning aside for lodging." Once more, the implication of traveler accommodations is present, though what form they take is not stated. A more lasting (though still temporary) home is inferred by κατάλυμα in Ezek 23:21: the prophet reminds Israel how "ἐπεσκέψω τὴν ἀνομίαν νεότητός σου, ἃ ἐποίεις ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἐν τῷ καταλύματί σου" "you reflected on the lawlessness of your youth, what you used to do in Egypt in your lodging." Egypt was, by implication, a temporary place for Israel to stay. In a similar way, the narrator of 1 Macc 3:45 laments that "τὸ ἁγίασμα καταπατούμενον, καὶ υἱοὶ ἀλλογενῶν ἐν τῇ ἄκρᾳ, κατάλυμα τοῖς ἔθνεσιν" "the sanctuary was trampled down, and aliens held the citadel; it was a lodging place for the Gentiles." Whether the author is depicting Jerusalem as a figurative κατάλυμα or whether the term itself is broad enough to appropriately refer to a city occupied by foreigners is unclear.

Four more verses add several other meanings for κατάλυμα. Jer 32:28 uses the term to refer to a lion's home ("ἐγκατέλιπεν ὥσπερ λέων κατάλυμα αὐτοῦ" "like a lion he has left his lodging"), making κατάλυμα appear synonymous with a lion's den. Then just a few chapters later, in Jer 40:12, there is a reference to the "καταλύματα ποιμένων κοιταζόντων πρόβατα" "lodgings of shepherds resting sheep," possibly referring to shelters for shepherds traveling with their herds. Finally, two Septuagint passages use κατάλυμα to

refer to accommodations for priests serving at a sanctuary: in 1 Reigns 9:22 it refers to the "lodging place" adjacent to the sanctuary of Ramathaim where Samuel brings Saul to partake of the recently offered sacrificial meat ("καὶ ἔλαβεν Σαμουηλ τὸν Σαουλ καὶ τὸ παιδάριον αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰσήγαγεν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ κατάλυμα"), and in 1 Supplements 28:13 it refers to "τῶν καταλυμάτων τῶν ἐφημεριῶν τῶν ἱερέων καὶ τῶν Λευιτῶν" "the lodgings of the classes of the priests and the Levites."

New Testament Usage

Of prime importance are the other verses in the New Testament which use κατάλυμα, particularly because of where they are found: Mark (a known source for Luke), and Luke itself. These two references, though brief, seem to indicate that the Gospel authors used κατάλυμα to refer to a type of guest room.

Κατάλυμα is first used in Mark 14:14. In preparation for the Passover meal, Jesus tells his disciples to approach a man in Jerusalem and say, "Ὁ διδάσκαλος λέγει, Ποῦ ἐστιν τὸ κατάλυμά μου ὅπου τὸ πάσχα μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν μου φάγω;" "The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'" Little is clear about this space: the only details provided in the text is that it was a "ἀνάγαιον μέγα" ("large room upstairs") provided by the "master of the house" and that it was sufficiently spacious and furnished for Jesus to share the Passover meal with the twelve apostles. Luke's account of the incident closely parallels Mark's: in Luke 22:11 the disciples say to the master of the house: "Λέγει σοι ὁ διδάσκαλος, Ποῦ ἐστιν τὸ κατάλυμα ὅπου τὸ πάσχα μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν μου φάγω" "The teacher asks you, 'Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" The comment about the room being a "ἀνάγαιον μέγα" is also repeated.

These two New Testament uses of κατάλυμα are extremely significant for evaluating how the term is used in Luke 2:7. We know with certainty that Luke was familiar with Mark's use of the term (since he used Mark's account as a source for his own narrative), and Luke's other use of the term naturally reflects how he understood it. Though some ambiguity remains, the room is clearly not an inn: it refers to a room on the upper level of a home which could be used for hosting guests.[25]

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25.   Bailey also emphasizes this point. He explains that in Luke 22:11, "the key word, *katalyma*, is defined; it is 'an upper room,' which is clearly *a guest room in a private home*. This precise meaning makes perfect sense when applied to the birth story. . . . If at the end of Luke's Gospel, the word *katalyma* means a guest room attached to a private home (22:11), why would it not have the same meaning near the beginning of his Gospel?" Bailey, *Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes,* 32–33.

Although these are the only times that a κατάλυμα is mentioned in the New Testament, two uses of the verb καταλύω in Luke bear mentioning. In Luke 9:12, Jesus's disciples encouraged him to disperse his audience "ἵνα πορευθέντες εἰς τὰς κύκλῳ κώμας καὶ ἀγροὺς καταλύσωσιν καὶ εὕρωσιν ἐπισιτισμόν" "so that they may go into the surrounding villages and country-side, to lodge and to get provisions." Later, when Jesus entered the house of Zacchaeus the tax collector, "ἰδόντες πάντες διεγόγγυζον λέγοντες ὅτι Παρὰ ἁμαρτωλῷ ἀνδρὶ εἰσῆλθεν καταλῦσαι" "all who saw it began to grumble and said 'he has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner'" (Luke 19:7). In both of these verses, a form of καταλύω is used to denote lodging somewhere—and in the second, the term is specifically used in the context of being a guest in a private home. The fact that Luke alone of the New Testament writers uses καταλύω in this sense helps provide context for his use of the related κατάλυμα in 2:7.

Synthesis

How does this analysis of κατάλυμα's use in other literature inform how it should be translated in Luke 2:7? Rather than suggest a singular meaning the word could have in Luke 2:7, this examination of other literature shows that κατάλυμα has an intrinsic vagueness which allows it to be used in a variety of situations to refer to a variety of things: government housing, priests' chambers, or even lions' dens. Translating the term specifically (with a term such as "inn") does not preserve the ambiguity Luke favored through his use of κατάλυμα. There are more specific Greek terms for places like inns or guest rooms—Luke himself employs one, πανδοκίον, in his parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:34). Luke's choice to use a broad term should be reflected in translations of this verse: instead of terms like "inn" or "guest room," a term such as "lodgings" (frequently employed in the translations of other texts cited above) is more appropriate.[26]

The Context of κατάλυμα

The above survey of how κατάλυμα is used in other literature establishes the range of meanings which the term could have in Luke 2:7, but only a close reading of the context of the verse can establish what meaning κατάλυμα should have. In this section, I will briefly examine four aspects of Luke 2 which provide context for how κατάλυμα should be translated: the immediate context of Luke 2:7, Joseph's relationship to Bethlehem, the timing of Mary and

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26. This stance is also advocated in Carlson, "The Accommodations of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem," 334; he advocates the terms "place to stay" or "accommodations."

Joseph's arrival, and the features of first-century Palestinian homes. When read in the light of each of these pertinent issues, κατάλυμα makes the most sense being translated as "guest room."

Immediate context

The immediate context of this verse is crucial for understanding what meaning to assign κατάλυμα. As stated before, Luke's comment that "οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τόπος ἐν τῷ καταλύματι" is often rendered, "there was no room for them in the inn." "Inn" is not the only questionable translation within this verse: there is some debate about how τόπος should be rendered as well. The most common understanding of τόπος is a place or physical space.[27] Such a meaning is clearly intended when the term is used in Luke's parable of the Great Banquet: after inviting the disadvantaged members of the city to his master's feast, "εἶπεν ὁ δοῦλος, Κύριε, γέγονεν ὃ ἐπέταξας, καὶ ἔτι τόπος ἐστίν" "the slave said, 'Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room '" (Luke 14:22). When τόπος is translated as "room" in Luke 2:7, it is too often read to mean a private, rented 'room' (like those available in hotels today), and reinforces the notion that κατάλυμα must be referring to an inn. This is incorrect: regardless of how κατάλυμα is rendered, τόπος should be understood to refer to physical space. (Interestingly, far more English translations are attuned to this issue than they are to the issues surrounding κατάλυμα: many opt for the more spatial-specific "place.")[28]

While this understanding of τόπος does not preclude the κατάλυμα of Luke 2:7 being an inn-like structure, it does inform our interpretation of the term. At the very least it eliminates the notion that there were no "rooms for rent" in the village inn: the phrase "οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τόπος" means that there was no physical space for them in the κατάλυμα, be it a caravansary-style establishment[29] or private guest room.

Another relevant issue in the immediate context of κατάλυμα is the article preceding it. Many commentators view this as a definite article, even inferring from its use that there was only one inn in Bethlehem, or that the inn

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27.   Bauer, "τόπος," BDAG 822–23.

28.   Nearly half of the fifty English translations available on Bible Gateway eschew "room" for a less misleading translation.

29.   "The public inns of the time should not be pictured as snug or comfortable according to medieval or modern standards. They were closer to a type of khan or caravansary where large groups of travelers found shelter under one roof; the people slept on cots or on a terrace elevated by a few steps from the floor, with the animals on the floor in the same room." Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 400.

was well-known.30 Yet this assumption does not take into account the other grammatical functions which τῷ may be serving in this context. An alternative possibility is that τῷ is an anaphoric article: it refers "back to the accommodations of Joseph and Mary presupposed in v. 6" and can be construed in English with a possessive.31 Thus, the end of Luke 2:7 can accurately be rendered "in their κατάλυμα," inferring that the couple had been staying in this κατάλυμα prior to the birth of Jesus. Commentators who regard the τῷ of this verse as a definite article often view the word as an obstacle to reading κατάλυμα as a private home or guest room;32 however, when the article is properly understood, it instead recommends these other translations as viable alternatives. Indeed, an implication of viewing τῷ as anaphoric is that Mary and Joseph had stayed in the κατάλυμα for some time before the birth of Jesus, and such a stay would make more sense in a private home than in public lodgings. This pivotal issue will be addressed below.

The Timing of Mary and Joseph's Arrival

One area in which tradition has trumped text throughout the ages is in the supposed timing of Jesus's birth relative to the arrival of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem. Traditionally, Mary and Joseph have been depicted as arriving in Bethlehem very shortly before the birth of Jesus, necessitating a frantic search for accommodations and the reluctant acceptance of a stable as a delivery room. Under these assumptions, it only makes sense that κατάλυμα should be translated as inn: had the couple arrived in town with more time, they might have been able to find alternative lodgings. Their late arrival, however, would have made it more likely that the inn would be full, and their urgency to find a safe place for Jesus's delivery would have driven them to use a stable.

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30.   The following quote from Elmer A. McNamara is representative of the opinions of several commentators: "That some such inn was meant by St. Luke, is attested to by his use of the definite article with the noun, i.e., there was no room for them in the inn. He supposes the inn was well known, probably because it was public and very likely the only one since Bethlehem was a small town." Elmer A. McNamara, "Because There Was No Room for Them in the Inn," *The Ecclesiastical Review* 105:6 (1941), 435. See also Brown *The Birth of the Messiah*, 400.

31.   Carlson, "The Accommodations of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem," 335. Carlson points out that "when the context indicates that the object referred to by the noun is possessed by or belongs to a person in the context, English often employs a possessive pronoun for Greek's definite article," as exhibited by a comparable construction in Luke 5:2.

32.   For example, Brown cites Luke's use of the definite article as the primary counterargument against reading κατάλυμα as a private home or room. See Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 400.

Although this interpretation does not necessarily contradict the text of Luke 2:6–7, the desperate details are not present in Luke's text, which simply states that "ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἐκεῖ ἐπλήσθησαν αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ τεκεῖν αὐτήν," literally "during their being there [in Bethlehem] the days for her to deliver were completed." Nothing in these words can be construed as necessarily implying that Jesus's delivery immediately followed Mary and Joseph's arrival in Bethlehem. Unless Luke's audience had access to other traditions or context for the infancy narrative, we can resonably assume that they understood the text as it straightforwardly reads: while Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem, Mary's pregnancy came to full term.

There are several explanations for why a hurried entry into Bethlehem has traditionally been the predominant reading. Late antique and medieval readers of the text likely approached the text in this way in order to make sense of the comment in Luke 2:7 that "οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τόπος ἐν τῷ καταλύματι." If the κατάλυμα is assumed to be an inn (as it was), then readers must grapple with why there was no room in the inn, and a frantic late-night search for accommodations fits. Readers from the second century on were also influenced by the popular *Protoevangelium of James*, which describes Mary going into labor before even reaching the outskirts of Bethlehem: she is forced to give birth in a wilderness cave.[33] While this story was primarily valued by ancient Christians for its Mariological perspectives, it almost certainly influenced nativity traditions. Perhaps also related is a textual variant for Luke 2:6 found in Codex Bezae: it states that the days of Mary's pregnancy were completed "ὡς δὲ παρεγένοντο" or "as they came near" to Bethlehem, inferring that she gave birth immediately upon arriving in the village. While the details in the *Protoevangelium of James* and Codex Bezae are important in helping us understand the early Christian communities who valued them, they should not (consciously or unconsciously) influence our understanding of Luke's much earlier text, which does not contain this late-night arrival scenario.

While we cannot know the precise timing of Mary and Joseph's arrival in Bethlehem in relation to Jesus's birth,[34] it is plausible to attribute the late-night

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33.   "When they were half way there, Mary said to him, 'Joseph, take me down from the donkey. The child inside me is pressing on me to come out.' He took her down from the donkey and said to her, 'Where can I take you to hide your shame? For his place is a wilderness.' He found a cave there and took her into it. Then he gave his sons to her and went out to find a Hebrew midwife in the region of Bethlehem." *Protoevangelium of James* 17:3–18:1. Translation from Bart D. Ehrman and Zlatko Plese, *The Other Gospels: Accounts of Jesus from Outside the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 32.

34.   Bailey asserts that Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem "a few weeks, perhaps even a month or more" before the birth of Jesus: a possibility, but an unproven one. Kenneth Bailey, "The Manger and the Inn: The Cultural Background of Luke 2.7," *Theological Review*

arrival scenario to post-biblical tradition and assume that Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem sometime before the birth of Jesus. Indeed, considering the circumstances of Joseph and Mary, it might be expected that their arrival and their lodgings would had been planned beforehand.[35] Such arrangements would imply that Joseph had ties with the village of Bethlehem—ties that are crucial in evaluating the meaning of κατάλυμα.

Joseph's Relationship to Bethlehem

A critical question which must be answered to ascertain the most likely sense of κατάλυμα is the relationship which Joseph had with Bethlehem. On this the text is somewhat unclear, and as with other aspects of the infancy narrative, it is important to separate details in the text itself from assumptions about the text. For example, the narrative in Luke 1 clearly establish Mary as a resident of Nazareth. However, while Luke 2 tells how Joseph went with Mary "ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ἐκ πόλεως Ναζαρὲθ εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν" "from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea" (2:4) for the purposes of the registration, it does not explicitly state that Joseph was from Nazareth. His residence there can certainly be implied, but other scenarios could be implied by the text as well. After all, at a time when "ἐπορεύοντο πάντες ἀπογράφεσθαι, ἕκαστος εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ πόλιν" "all went to their own towns to be registered" (2:3), Joseph traveled to Bethlehem. This, combined with Luke's comment that Joseph was of the "ἐξ οἴκου καὶ πατριᾶς Δαυίδ" "house and family of David" (2:4), has led some commentators to suggest that Joseph himself was originally from Bethlehem.[36] Joseph, they claim, had traveled to Nazareth previously to seek work or (more likely) to retrieve his fiancée Mary and bring her back to his native Bethlehem.[37] This theory helps explain why Joseph would have had

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2 (1979): 33. He also sees in the phrasing of Luke 2:6 evidence that Mary and Joseph were present in Bethlehem for days before the delivery, citing the comment that ἐπλήσθησαν αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ τεκεῖν αὐτήν "the days of her delivery were completed" in Bethlehem. Bailey, *Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes*, 26. However, this construction simply means that the days of Mary's pregnancy were completed, not that the couple spent days in Bethlehem before the birth. See the LXX text of Gen 25:24 for a similar construction.

35.   "Knowing that they had to be in Bethlehem over a period, long delays in registration being likely, and that Mary was expecting a child, Joseph and Mary would travel quite some time before the baby was to be born, and would probably have arranged to stay with family or friends. Luke does not say that Jesus was born immediately after Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem." A. J. Kerr, "No Room in the Kataluma," *ExpTim* 103:15 (1991), 15.

36.   Even though it is important not to harmonize the two infancy narratives, it is worth noting that Matthew's account does not mention Nazareth at all until after Mary and Joseph's return from Egypt: the text assumes that the couple are simply residents of Bethlehem when Jesus is born and when the Magi visit.

37.   For examinations of this view, see Pierre Benoit, "'Non erat eis locus in diversorio' (Lc 2,7)," *Melanges bibliques en homage au R. P. Beda Rigaux* (ed. Albert Descamps and R. P.

to travel to Bethlehem for a Roman census, which typically did not require people to register in an ancestral town,[38] but rather where they owned property. Rainer Riesner succinctly argues: "That Joseph set out for Bethlehem because of a tax census (Lk 2:14) is explicable only if he had land holdings there. Indeed, it is probable that it was his place of residence."[39] It also would help explain why Mary would accompany Joseph on such a journey: her presence would not have been required for Joseph to register, and if his home was in Nazareth, he almost certainly would have left the pregnant Mary in Nazareth as he traveled to Bethlehem for the registration and then returned home.[40]

This approach to the text, though plausible, is not certain. One of the chief arguments against it is Luke 2:39, which states that after Jesus's circumcision Joseph and Mary returned "εἰς πόλιν ἑαυτῶν Ναζαρέθ" "to their own town of Nazareth."[41] But even more relevant may be the simple fact that, despite what is modernly known about Roman registration practices, Luke writes that Joseph was traveling to Bethlehem because of his lineage: he was "ἐξ οἴκου καὶ πατριᾶς Δαυίδ." The numerous and significant historical issues with how the registration is described in Luke 2 should serve as a caution: we cannot confidently rely on knowledge of standard Roman practices to correctly inform our reading of Luke's narrative, which for one reason or another appears to present Joseph traveling to Bethlehem as required by his ancestry.

But regardless of whether Joseph's family home was in Bethlehem or whether it was just his ancestral home, Joseph's ties to the village are key in determining how the κατάλυμα of 2:7 should be understood. If Joseph truly was a native son of Bethlehem, then he almost certainly would have stayed with

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Andre de Halleux; Gembloux: Duculot, 1970), 184–85; Carlson, "The Accommodations of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem," 337.

38. "In Roman censuses there is no clear evidence of a practice of going to an ancestral city to be enrolled." Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 396.

39. Rainer Riesner, "Archaeology and Geography," *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels,* 45.

40. "Even in the historically inaccurate census procedure that Luke describes, women would not have been required to go in person to be counted. Husbands or fathers would have registered for them. So it makes no realistic sense for a woman to make the eighty-five mile trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem, much less a woman nine months pregnant!" Robert J. Miller, *Born Divine: The Births of Jesus and other Sons of God* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge Press, 2003), 57.

41. Carlson argues that the lack of an article in this phrase means that the verse should be translated "into a city of their own," meaning it was one of several they identify with and not that it was necessarily Joseph's home. Carlson, "The Accommodations of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem," 338. While this is possible, I can find no other scholars that advocate this reading, and even without the article the phrase can still imply that Nazareth was "their own town."

close family members.[42] Bruce Malina remarks that Joseph "would have been obligated to stay with family, not in a commercial inn." He also points out that "if close family was not available, mention of Joseph's lineage would have resulted in immediate village recognition that he belonged and space would have been made available."[43] Thus, even if Joseph was only linked to Bethlehem through lineage, that lineage would have been enough to earn him the hospitality of a distant relative.[44] Arguments that the homes of Bethlehem would have been filled to capacity due to the census disregard the simple fact that Roman registrations took place over a period, not a single day.[45] Regardless, an added measure of hospitality could certainly have been expected due to Mary's pregnancy.[46]

Each of these points confirms that, regardless of how strong Joseph's ties with Bethlehem were, he would have been far more likely to stay in a family home than in an inn,[47] thus suggesting the most appropriate translation for κατάλυμα in 2:7 "guest room." Yet this leaves an unanswered question:

42. It is also worth noting that, in addition to any family members Joseph had in Bethlehem, by this point in his narrative Luke has already made it clear that Mary had relatives living in the vicinity: Elizabeth and Zacharias. Luke 1:39 places their home in "a Judean town in the hill country," in which Bethlehem was situated. If the ancient traditions that Ein Kerem was John the Baptist's birthplace have any historical value, then Elizabeth and Zacharias resided only eight kilometers away from Bethlehem. Bailey points out that if it was difficult for Mary and Joseph to find accommodations in Bethlehem, Mary would have naturally turned to the woman with whom she had just spent three months of her pregnancy. See Bailey, *Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes*, 26.

43. Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels* (2d ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 375–76. Emphasis added.

44. This point is also fiercely asserted by Bailey, who argues that it would have been in violation of deep-seated cultural norms for no one to accept even a distantly related man into their home. Bailey, *Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes*, 25.

45. "Augustus reorganized the method of assessment of tax throughout the empire and instituted provincial censuses to achieve his purpose, but he did not require everyone in the Roman world to be registered on the self-same day as is required by modern states. Censuses took place at different times in different areas, and in each case over a period rather than on a particular day." Kerr, "No Room in the Kataluma," 15.

46. "In every culture a woman about to give birth is given special attention. Simple rural communities the world over always assist one of their own women in childbirth regardless of the circumstances. Are we to imagine that Bethlehem was an exception?[. . .] Surely the community would have sensed its responsibility to help Joseph find adequate shelter for Mary and provide the care she needed. To turn away a descendant of David in the 'City of David' would be an unspeakable shame on the entire village." Bailey, *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes*, 26.

47. With reference to the traditional inn, it should be noted that "[i]t is doubtful whether a commercial inn actually existed in Bethlehem, which stood on no major roads." Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 128–29. Granted, we cannot be certain that Bethlehem lacked a small caravansary or comparable lodgings for travelers, but the size, location, and insignificance of the town suggest it would not have needed such an establishment. See also Bailey, "The Manger and the Inn," 39; Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary,* 375–76.

if Joseph and Mary were being hosted at a private home, why did Mary lay her baby "in a manger?" This question can only be resolved by examining the common features of first-century Palestinian homes.

First-Century Palestinian Homes

Examining some key features of first-century Palestinian homes not only provides important context for the κατάλυμα, but it also helps explain why Mary might have laid Jesus in a manger while staying in a private home. A description of a common Jewish home is given by Safrai and Stern:

> From the literary sources and archaeological excavations one finds that most houses had at least two stories, and sometimes even three. . . . The upper floors were not always full stories; sometimes they consisted of single rooms on a roof or an attic with its entrance from a ladder inside the house. These attics could be used for a member of the household or as a guest room. Upper chambers also served as meeting-places for small groups; numerous traditions from the Temple period and later tell of assemblies of sages or heads of schools which took place in such chambers. . . . Whether or not original plans called for upper stories, it was common to add rooms or small structures to the roofs of houses and to the court-yards, as it became necessary. The most frequent reason was the expansion of a family; a newly married son customarily brought his wife to live in the family house. The father would set aside a room within the house for the couple or build a marital house (בית חתנות) on the roof.[48]

Several features are noteworthy in this description. First, it affirms that many Jewish homes possessed a small room that could be used to host guests. Of particular interest is the fact that these rooms were often built on the upper floor of a home and were frequently used as a meeting place for small groups. This description neatly matches the description of the κατάλυμα in which Jesus held the Last Supper: it was an "ἀνάγαιον" "upper room" and was properly furnished for a meeting of a sage with his disciples. If such a room is indicated by κατάλυμα at the end of the gospel of Luke, could a similar room not be indicated near the beginning of the narrative—in 2:7? The other use mentioned for this type of room is telling: a room for a recently married man and his wife. If Joseph and Mary had returned to stay with Joseph's family in Bethlehem, it is possible that such a chamber would have been prepared specifically for them. If they were staying with more distant relatives, it is still likely that they would have been given similar accommodations if they were available, as they were the most appropriate for a newly married couple.

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48. S. Safrai and M. Stern, eds., *The Jewish People in the First Century: Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural, and Religious Life and Institutions* (2 vols.; Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, Assen, 1976), 2:730–31.

However, as has already been cited, Luke records Mary as placing Jesus in a manger because there was no space for them in the κατάλυμα. There are two plausible reasons for this. First, the guest room might have been taken by other guests, requiring Joseph and Mary to stay somewhere else in the house. While the traditional image of Bethlehem teeming with visitors for the registration is an exaggeration, it is likely that if Joseph had come for the event, others (even members of his family) may have returned as well, and the guest room may have been occupied by someone else. The other possibility is that there was not sufficient space in the κατάλυμα to accommodate Jesus's delivery.[49] Childbirth in antiquity was a dangerous procedure for both mother and child, and it is likely that Mary would have been assisted by a midwife as well as the women of the house. The κατάλυμα of the Last Supper was noted for being large, but these guest rooms likely varied in size. If the room in which Mary and Joseph were staying was small, Mary would have relocated to the main room of the house, where there would have been plenty of space for the other women to help with her delivery.

The other relevant feature of first-century Palestinian homes was the space for animals to be kept within the home itself. Traditionally the mention of a manger in the infancy narrative conjures up images of a stable to modern readers, but such would not have been the case in Luke's day. Many homes in the Levant were equipped to house animals indoors during the night: this protected the animals from theft and also kept the house warm at night during the colder months.[50] Most homes had one large main room, where most of the family lived and slept. Near the entrance at one end of the room was an area that was set lower than the elevated floor of the rest of the room. At night, animals would be brought into this lower portion of the room, and would feed out of mangers that were either set into the walls or in the edge of the raised floor.[51] Structures for housing animals—what modern audiences would con-

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49. Carlson advocates this claim; he claims it fits the grammar of Luke 2:7 better than alternative scenarios. Carlson, "The Accommodations of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem," 335.

50. Indeed, Israelites were keeping animals and mangers inside their homes long before Luke's day: the traditional "pillared house" common in the Iron Age Levant had an area for animals to sleep and feed. For a description of this type of house, see Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 28–35.

51. Many commentators have noted this sort of layout in first-century houses, particularly emphasizing the presence of a manger in the home. See Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary,* 333; Carlson, "The Accommodations of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem," 341; Kerr, "No Room in the Kataluma," 15; K. Kipgen, "Translating, kataluma in Luke 2:7," *The Bible Translator* 34:4 (1983): 443; Bailey, *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes*, 29; Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 129.

sider stables—certainly existed in ancient Judea, but if the κατάλυμα in Luke 2:7 is seen as a guest room, then it is far more likely that Mary would have given birth and placed her baby in the manger of a family's living room than in a stable. In a crowded home, placing a swaddled baby in the hay of a manger would have been a safe and warm resting place for the child.

Conclusion

Based on the contexts of both Greek literature and Luke 2, we can develop a clearer picture of the scene Luke intended to convey in Luke 2:7. Examining how the term is used in other literature shows that κατάλυμα can be used to refer to a wide variety of "places to stay," and examining its context within Luke 2 clarifies what sort of lodgings the term likely refers to there: the guest room of a private home. Reading κατάλυμα this way fits with the other elements of the story: it better reflects the immediate context of the verse it is used in, the timing of Mary and Joseph's arrival in Bethlehem, Joseph's relationship with the town, and the realities of first-century living than any other interpretation. This reading suggests the following scenario for the birth of Jesus: Joseph, who is to one degree or another connected with Bethlehem, brings Mary to the village some time in advance of her delivery. They stay with relations of Joseph. When the time comes for Mary to give birth to Jesus, the guest room of the family home has too little room to accommodate the process of delivery. Mary is relocated to the main room of the house, where Jesus is born and placed in one of the mangers present in the room.

This reading of Luke's infancy narrative makes the story of Jesus's birth even less unusual than the traditional reading of the story. Being rejected from an inn and being forced to give birth amid animals gives Jesus a humble yet noteworthy beginning: Jesus is born in desperate and memorable circumstances. But placing Jesus's delivery in the main room of a Bethlehemite home gives him a birth narrative similar to probably thousands of Jewish babies. Nothing about the circumstances is extraordinary: being swaddled was a common experience for infants,[52] and the most that can be inferred by being placed in a manger is that the home may have been crowded and there was nothing else approximating a crib available. In short, Luke portrays Jesus entering the world in a rather unremarkable way.

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52. "The statement declares Mary's maternal care; she did for Jesus what any ancient Palestinian mother would have done for a newborn babe (see Wis 7:4; cf. Ezek 16:4). It is not to be understood as a sign of poverty or of the Messiah's lowly birth." Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 408.

Such a reading, though it departs from the traditional exegesis of the nativity, actually fits well the recognized emphases of Luke's infancy narrative. Commentators have long noted the paucity of details on Jesus's birth, particularly in comparison to the lengthier narratives of the annunciation to Mary, the angelic visit to the shepherds, and the presentation of Jesus in the temple.[53] It is in these narratives that Luke finds the evidence he wishes to portray of Jesus's divinity and salvific destiny, for they provide angels and inspired figures (the shepherds, Simeon, and Anna) with an opportunity to bear witness of what Jesus would eventually do.[54] Similar elements were apparently not a part of the earliest traditions surrounding the birth itself, and Luke evidently did not see fit to augment them (though later Christians would take it upon themselves to do so). Luke's emphasis reflects what must have been most important for him and for his early Christian audience: not the specifics of Jesus's birth, but what that birth portended for the world.

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53. In contrast to the annunciation to Mary (13 verses), the angelic visit to the shepherds (13 verses), and Jesus's presentation at the temple (17 verses), the actual birth of Jesus really only occupies two verses.

54. "The birth itself is only briefly narrated (2:6–7) and is not really the focus of the story, which is centered instead on the angelic announcement (2:8–14). The angel's solemn and joyful words in 2:10–11 convey the basic meaning, not only of this scene, but of Luke's whole infancy narrative." Miller, *Born Divine*, 55.

LEXICAL VARIATION IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF ברא: HOMONYMY OR POLYSEMY?

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Introduction

The Hebrew verb ברא, most commonly associated with its gloss in Gen 1:1 as "created," is attested in various verbal stems that carry separate meanings.[1] Its Qal and Niphal forms are often translated as "to create," but its five appearances in Piel are variations of "to cut," while its Hiphil—a hapax legomenon—is given the sense of to "fatten." This has led to disagreeing interpretations of the data, and the debate has recently been taken up again with the introduction of advances in cognitive linguistics.[2] The question lies in the correlation between the Qal/Niphal and the Piel forms of the root. What is at stake is the very concept of creation as understood by the authors of Genesis, Isaiah, some of the Psalms, and other texts.[3] An ongoing discussion over the

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1. This paper deals primarily with the information provided in the following three lexica: F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, with an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891–1906); Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*, 12th edition, ed. Frants Buhl (Leipzig: F. C. W. Vogel, 1895); Koehler and Baumgartner, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexicon zum Alten Testament* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967–1995); David J. A. Clines, *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993–2001).

2. For the latest publications dealing with the topic, see the following: E. J. van Wolde, "Why the Verb ברא Does Not Mean 'To Create' in Genesis 1.1–2.4a," *JSOT* 34.3 (2009): 3–23; Bob Becking and Marjo C. A. Korpel, "To Create, to Separate or to Construct: An Alternative for a Recent Proposal as to the Interpretation of ברא in Gen 1:1–2:4a," *JHS* 10.3 (2010): 2–21; E. J. van Wolde and Robert Rezetko, "Semantics and the Semantics of ברא: A Rejoinder to the Arguments Advanced by B. Becking and M. Korpel," *JHS* 11.9 (2011): 2–39; Terrance Randall Wardlaw, "The Meaning of ברא in Genesis 1:1–2:3," *VT* 64.3 (2014): 502–13.

3. The possibility of overlapping semantic boundaries, or of a shared etymology between Qal "to create" and Piel "to cut" would suggest that the Hebrew concept of the creation of the world is related to a type of cutting, separating, shaping, or similar action.

last five years has provided significant insights, but one important aspect of the argument has continually been overlooked: the role of lexicographical history in the evolving understanding of ברא. This paper will not attempt to provide a solution to the question. Instead, it will summarize the most recent scholarship on the debate, reevaluate the question being asked, and analyze lexicographical history on the subject.

Current State of the Debate

The difficulty with understanding the relationship between the different meanings of ברא was for the most part thought to have been resolved—or at least satisfactorily understood—during much of the twentieth century. The general consensus was that creation and cutting were two unrelated meanings derived from different etymologies. Occasionally, a commentary or article would suggest otherwise,[4] but these arguments went mostly unheeded. Yet even when asserting the absence of a correlation between the two meanings, scholars remained careful enough to mention in passing the alternate possibility. However, one major challenge brought up in recent years has rekindled the debate.

In the *New Cambridge Bible Commentary for Genesis*, published in 2009, Arnold addresses the issue of the verb's exclusive association with Israel's deity.[5] Though simply a repeat of older arguments, he hints at the possibility of the root's older meaning of "separate by cutting," which was only later expanded to refer to creation when used in a different verb stem. This point would quickly be picked up as an important component of the debate.

Published that same year was an ambitious monograph by van Wolde, which served as the catalyst for the ensuing interest in ברא. Her *Reframing Biblical Studies* brought the literary approaches of cognitive linguistics, which have been picking up considerable traction over the last two decades, to the more traditional field of biblical studies.[6] As part of her attempt to demonstrate the benefits of such an approach, she devoted part of a chapter to a case study of temporal and atemporal relations in Genesis 1, focusing especially on the nature of the verb ברא. She found her conclusions important enough to

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4. For example, see S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis, with Introduction and Notes* (London: Methuen & Co., 1904), 3; Howard E. Hanson, "Num. XVI 30 and the Meaning of bārā," *VT* 22 (1972): 353–59. Driver was a key figure in making this point a long-lasting one, as will be shown below.

5. Bill T. Arnold, *Genesis,* New Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 36–37.

6. E. J. van Wolde, *Reframing Biblical Studies: When Language and Text Meet Culture, Cognition, and Context* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009).

warrant the publication of a separate article that year, devoted entirely to her understanding of this verb.[7]

Van Wolde's approach to the P creation account in Genesis suggests that ברא has been misunderstood all along. Contra the general view that ברא and עשה are at times used in synonymous parallelism, she analyzes these two creation verbs to refer to entirely different processes. By showing that ברא, unlike עשה, always includes either two primary landmarks or one primary and one secondary landmark, she compares it to the English equivalent of "to distinguish between two things" and "to distinguish one thing from another thing."[8] This and other findings led her to conclude that the true meaning of the verb in its Qal stem is "to separate" or "to differentiate." According to van Wolde, Genesis 1 is therefore an account of two distinct processes: creation (עשה) and differentiation (ברא).[9]

The following year, Becking and Korpel co-authored an article which attempted to counter many of van Wolde's points, while simultaneously proposing a more nuanced understanding of ברא than the traditional "to create."[10] By applying van Wolde's interpretation to attestations of ברא outside of Genesis 1, they seek to show that her arguments are no longer tenable and must therefore be discounted. They then briefly describe the traditions of associating ברא Qal "to create" with ברא Piel "to cut," and dismiss them as old notions, long abandoned by etymological considerations. Their own proposal associates ברא with קנה, and traces the former's hypothetical introduction as a theological term in postexilic times. Ultimately, they propose that the Qal form of the verb be identified as having the sense of "to construct," and Yahweh "is imagined as having 'constructed' the cosmos as his temple."[11] The Piel form is, in their opinion, an etymologically unrelated word.[12]

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7.   Van Wolde, "Why the Verb ברא Does Not Mean 'To Create,'" 3–23.

8.   Van Wolde, *Reframing Biblical Studies*, 198–99.

9.   This conclusion apparently does not take into consideration the possibility that "differentiation" in an ancient context may be semantically equivalent to "creation." For a detailed monograph on this idea of functional ontology, see John H. Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011).

10.   Becking and Korpel, "To Create," 2–21.

11.   Becking and Korpel, "To Create," 20.

12.   "Because the existence of a Hebrew root ברה<brw/y, 'to cut in half,' may be assumed on the basis of the well-known idiom כרת ברית, literally 'to cut a covenant,' and the noun ברית 'covenant, treaty, contract,' it seems likely that a similar confusion [to one found in the Arabic brw/bry] has taken place in the few places where ברא Piel occurs. There are more examples of this type of confusion of the weak consonants א and ה at the end of verbal forms." (Becking and Korpel, "To Create," 5)

In other words, according to Becking and Korpel, ברא Piel is nothing more than a misspelling of the hypothetical root ברה with the meaning of "to cut in half." However, there is no evidence that such a root exists in Hebrew, and their single piece of evidence (ברית) is

Van Wolde teamed up with Rezetko and published a response to Becking and Korpel one year later in 2011.[13] They set out to establish the original contribution of van Wolde's thesis. They seek to support it by providing select cases outside of Genesis 1 where her interpretation may fit the context, and also by providing abundant etymological support for a connection between ברא and separating/cutting. The etymological evidence is especially helpful here and primarily consists of Arabic, but also Akkadian and Aramaic cognates.[14] They then go on to critique Becking and Korpel's proposed meaning of "to construct," one point at a time. In the end, they argue that van Wolde's original proposal of "to separate" "remains a viable explanation for the semantics of this verb."[15]

The latest addition to the discussion came in 2014 with the publication of an article in Vetus Testamentum by Terrance Wardlaw.[16] By looking at the range of verbs within the semantic domain "to create," Wardlaw succeeds in identifying several flaws in the arguments of both van Wolde and Becking-Korpel. He disagrees with van Wolde that ברא need be interpreted as a form of separation, especially in the Qal. He also finds Becking-Korpel's conclusions to go contrary to the evidence that suggests that ברא Qal and ברא Piel are related. He therefore returns to some of the older arguments that identify ברא as a form of "to create (something new)," and creation is here conceptualized as "to form by shape or cutting."[17] Finally, Wardlaw suggests that the use of traditional cosmological vocabulary in the Pentateuch and the Psalms—such as the verb ברא—was intended to trigger in the mind of the audience an association with Elohim's act of creation in Genesis.

Remapping the Problem (Identifying the Question)

Ultimately, the core of the question being addressed has remained the same over the last century and a half. Yet the complexity of the arguments, along with the introduction of new ideas and approaches to the problem, has contributed to obscuring the simplicity of the question itself. An understanding of the fundamental linguistic concepts involved is the first essential step in perceiving the question behind the debate. This will in turn allow a study

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weak at best. Considering the Israelite appreciation for the cognate accusative, one would then expect כרת ברית to instead be ברה ברית.

13. Van Wolde and Rezetko, "Semantics and the Semantics," 2–39.

14. Because the focus of this paper is primarily lexicography, I will not attempt to address any potential cognates here. Those will be covered in a forthcoming paper.

15. Van Wolde and Rezetko, "Semantics, and the Semantics" 39.

16. Wardlaw, "The Meaning of ברא," 502–13.

17. Wardlaw, "The Meaning of ברא," 511–512.

of the lexicographical corpus to shed light on the discussion as it currently stands.

As Clines has pointed out, "The treatment of homonyms has been perhaps the most variable and inconsistent aspect of Hebrew lexicography."[18] This concept of homonymy is precisely what the question regarding ברא deals with. And though recent scholarship has involved efforts to understand this specific aspect of ברא, it has failed to clearly identify the problem in terms of homonyms and polysemes.

A true linguistic homonym[19] is simultaneously a homophone and homograph. This means that the two or more words in question sound and look the same, but they vary in meaning. The difference in meaning is caused by the fact that these are etymologically unrelated words, and have normally come to be homophones and homographs only in their latest forms. As an example of a true homonym, the English word *arm* contains two differing meanings: a "defensive and offensive outfit for war,"[20] and "the upper limb of the human body, from the shoulder to the hand."[21] The etymology of the first can be traced as coming from the French *armes*, originally the Latin *arma* (no plural), meaning "arms, fittings, tackle, gear." The second comes through Common Germanic—attested in Old Saxon, Old Frisian, and others—and has been traced to the hypothetical Old German *armoz*, which is a cognate of the Latin *armus* "shoulder." These are two separate words that evolved over time, eventually becoming homonyms in English.

A polyseme, on the other hand, varies from a homonym in that its different meanings have never been separate words from separate etymologies, but rather come from a single word that developed different meanings. These different meanings often include one concrete, older sense, and an expanded metaphorical meaning. Though the connection between the two senses is often clear at first, with time they can grow further apart until their correlation becomes obscure and forgotten. The word *pupil* is a polyseme in English. The two meanings of "a person who is being taught by another"[22] and "the opening

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18.   David J. A. Clines, "Towards a Science of Comparative Classical Hebrew Lexicography," 5. Unpublished paper, read on July 2 2014, at the 14th International Conference of the International Syriac Language Project, held in St. Petersburg under the auspices of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, Russian Academy of Sciences, June 29–July 4, 2014.
19.   Common usage varies in that it often includes words that are spelled differently but sound the same. This is not true of homonyms in a linguistic sense.
20.   "arm, n.2." OED Online. December 2014. Oxford University Press.
21.   "arm, n.1." OED Online. December 2014. Oxford University Press.
22.   "pupil, n.1." OED Online. December 2014. Oxford University Press.

in the iris through which light passes into the eye”[23] may seem entirely unrelated, but in reality they share an etymology. The first is traced back through the Anglo-Norman and Middle French *pupille*, to the classical Latin *pūpillus* “an orphan or child.” The second follows the same etymology, and is simply a transferred use of the classical Latin *pūpilla*—the female form of *pūpillus*—“so called on account of the small reflected image seen when looking into someone’s pupil.” Interestingly, an equivalent semantic expansion occurred in Greek, where κόρη came to mean the pupil of the eye and also a girl or maiden.

With these two terms defined, it becomes easy to see that the question regarding ברא is simply a matter of deciding if the Qal/Niphal and the Piel forms of the verb are homonyms or polysemes. If they are homonyms, then “to create” and “to cut” are two senses that do not share an etymology and are therefore unrelated. This is the model taken up by Becking and Korpel and, as will be shown, by the most modern lexica. On the other hand, if these two forms are polysemes, then their etymologies do converge at some point, and the Qal “to create” likely began as a semantic expansion of the more concrete Piel “to cut.”[24] This is the argument made most recently by Wardlaw, and it is essentially—though indirectly and with some important variations—what van Wolde has claimed as well.

Despite the simplicity of the argument, arriving at a solution is no easy task. Even within languages with a far more extensive corpus than Hebrew, it is often very difficult to solve questions of homonymy. This is because the amount of etymological evidence required is hard to come by. The difficulty is therefore much more evident in Classical Hebrew, where cognates and etymological data are often questionable at best. This is why so much of the argument has instead focused on the context surrounding the use of ברא, with etymological evidences providing secondary support. The lexica have traditionally included cognates as a way for scholars to pursue etymological studies, but interpretation varies widely. I will now turn to a study of how ברא has been understood through various generations of Hebrew lexicography.

ברא in the Lexica

Some of the recent papers summarized above deal briefly with lexicography, but only inasmuch as it serves their respective arguments. In fact, this ongoing discussion serves to illustrate the dangers of the uncritical use of lexica. The scholars involved have generally been careful when using data compiled

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23. “pupil, n.2.” OED Online. December 2014. Oxford University Press.
24. As far as I know, the opposite possibility—that the Piel is an expansion of the Qal—has never been explored.

by lexicographers, yet the different sides of the argument tend to imitate the two major understandings of ברא as found in the lexica. David Cline's words of caution are applicable here: "I will offer an axiom: most dictionaries are copies of other dictionaries. Just as well, you might say, since a dictionary that had only original meanings would be useless. The downside, though, is that the mistakes and myopia of the past tend to be perpetuated, and that means for over 500 years in some cases."[25] If nothing else, a lexicographical study of ברא will shed light on the trends and evolving understanding of the word's meaning. A full overview of the way lexicographers have handled ברא over time will therefore prove to be valuable in understanding the current debate.

The history of Hebrew lexicography goes back further than is often appreciated. The tenth century began to see the Jewish compilation of Hebrew lexica in Arabic and Hebrew,[26] followed in the sixteenth century by Christian lexicographers writing in Latin, which continued to be an important language for lexica well into the nineteenth century.[27] Though many of the early works certainly recognized a difference between the meanings of the Qal and the Piel of ברא, they had no systematic way of identifying homonyms or polysemes. Instead, the various meanings of words were often listed under the same entry.[28] These sometimes included a postulated meaning that could perhaps be understood as the root's original sense from which the diverse connotations were derived.[29]

The first lexicographer to list glosses in a manner that would identify homophones was Johannes Coccius in his 1714 edition of *Lexicon et commentarius sermonis hebraici et chaldaici*.[30] Though he did not do this with his entry for ברא (leaving it instead simply divided by verbal stems), Coccius included

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25.   Clines, "Towards a Science," 9.

26.   Such as David ben Abraham al-Fasi, *Kitab Jami al-Alfaz* (Arabic: *book containing a collection of words*), also known as *Agron*; Abu al-Walīd Marwān ibn Janāh (R. Jonah), *Kitab al uṣul*, *Sefer haShorashim* (*Book of the Roots*); Solomon ibn Parḥon, *Maḥberet he'Aruk* (Notebook of Order), 1160.

27.   Such as Alfonsus Zamorensis, *Vocabularium hebraicum atque chaldaicum totius Veteris Testamenti*, in the Complutensian Polyglot (*Academia complutensis*), vol. 6: A.G. de Brocario, 1514–17; Johannes Simonis, *Dictionarium Veteris Testamenti hebraeo-chaldaicum* (Halle: Bierwirth, 1752); Georg Benedict Winer, *Lexicon manuale hebraicum et chaldaicum* (Leipzig: F. Fleischer, 1828).

28.   Though these various glosses sometimes contained small numbers as a form of organization, it is difficult to say how the lexicographers thought of them—whether as being etymologically related or not. It seems likely that this was not considered an important enough concern, as long as translation and understanding could be achieved.

29.   For example, see the entry for ברע in Johann Buxtorf the Elder, *Epitome radicum hebraicarum* (Basel: Konrad von Waldkirch, 1600). See also Clines, "Towards a Science," 4–5.

30.   Johannes Cocceius, *Lexicon et commentarius sermonis hebraici et chaldaici* (Leipzig: Reyher, 1714).

roman numerals that subdivided ברע into three homonyms: 1. *miscere, confundi*; 2. *in fidem suam recipere, spondere pro aliquo*; 3. *suavem esse*.[31] It would be another century before this technique would be imitated by Gesenius[32] and most lexica thereafter.

German lexicography flooded the Hebrew scholarship of the nineteenth century, aided greatly by Gesenius's ambitious projects. After the third edition of his compendium dictionary for students, *Hebräisches und chaldäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament,*[33] he began preparations for a Latin translation designed for international students.[34] However, the advances proposed by Bopp and Grimm in the field of Indo-European philology[35] caused Gesenius to reevaluate the whole project. His highly scholarly *Thesaurus philologicus criticus linguae Hebraeae et Chaldaeae Veteris Testamenti,*[36] published in fascicles between 1829 and 1858, was affected by this shift. One of the pertinent changes was the grouping of triliteral roots under "families" of biliteral ones. ברא was grouped under the family of [בר], along with various others. However, all the different glosses of ברא continued to be listed under a single root—subdivided only by verbal stems—and without a sense of homonymy. These changes pushed back the publication of the Latin lexicon to 1833, as it drew heavily from both the *Handwörterbuch* and the *Thesaurus*. Gesenius's grammars underwent similar changes at about this time.

In fact, none of Gesenius's works split ברא into homonyms during his lifetime, but his work would have an influence on the two leading theories for ברא a few decades later. The first of these was the publication in 1891 of the first part of what would become known as the Brown Driver Briggs. After securing the rights to Edward Robinson's English translation of Gesenius's Latin lexicon, these three scholars planned to update the work. The end result was more of a complete rewriting, which included scholarship from the most up-to-date editions of the *Handwörterbuch*, Gesenius's *Thesaurus*, and the most recent advances in Hebrew philology.[37] Though the work in its entirety—*A Hebrew and*

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31.   Cocceius, *Lexicon et commentarius*, 640–44. See also Clines, "Towards a Science," 5, who identified this as the first lexicographical attempt at depicting homonymy.

32.   See entry for ברע, Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebräisch-Deutsches Handwörterbuch über die Schriften des Alten Testaments* (Leipzig: F. C. W. Vogel, 1810–1812), 888–89.

33.   Gesenius, *Hebräisches und chaldäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament.*.

34.   Shimeon Brisman, *History and Guide to Judaic Dictionaries and Concordances* (Hoboken, N. J.: Ktav Publishing House, 2000), 65.

35.   See preface to Wilhelm Gesenius, trans. Edward Robinson, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, Including the Biblical Chaldee*, 3rd edition (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1849).

36.   Wilhelm Gesenius, *Thesaurus philologicus criticus linguae Hebraeae et Chaldaeae Veteris Testamenti*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: F. C. W. Vogel, 1829–1858).

37.   See the preface to BDB.

English Lexicon of the Old Testament, with an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic—would not be published until 1906, this first part of 1891 included the entry for ברא with its two identified homonyms. They were distinguished thus: 1. (Qal) "shape, fashion, create," also (Niphal) "be created," and (Piel) "cut down, cut out"; 2. (Hiphil) "be fat."[38] This two-homonym hypothesis has remained in all subsequent editions of the BDB, which continues to be widely used.

The three-homonym model would come only four years later, and it would largely be the work of Frants Buhl, editor of the twelfth through sixteenth editions of Gesenius's *Handwörterbuch*. Published in 1895, the twelfth edition incorporated the roman numeral system for homonyms to identify three under the triliteral ברא: I. (Kal) "schaffen, hervorbringen" and (Niphal) "geschaffen werden"; II. (Hiphil) "fett machen, mästen"; III. (Piel) "abholzen, den Wald lichten, roden."[39] This, then, is the origin among the lexica of the tradition that sees the Qal "to create" and the Piel "to cut" as coming from separate etymologies and therefore being unrelated.

Interestingly, it appears that both models were developed independent of each other. Though there is no definitive evidence, Buhl does not seem to have consulted the BDB for his work on the *Handwörterbuch*—instead, this was only one of the many important changes that came about when he became the lexicon's editor. And though the completed BDB was published only years after Buhl's work, the first part containing the entry for ברא was published before the twelfth edition of the *Handwörterbuch*.

Subsequent lexica make it clear that both hypotheses picked up adherents, though it is true that Buhl's model has been preferred. Eduard König's *Hebräisches und aramäisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*[40] followed the BDB's combination of the Qal/Niphal and Piel under ברא I. Yet Koehler and Baumgartner's *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti libros*,[41] published in fascicles from 1948 to 1953, instead followed Buhl's model. This later became the highly influential *Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexicon zum Alten Testament*,[42] or *HALAT*, as well as its English counterpart, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon*

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38. BDB, 135.
39. Gesenius, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*, 119–20.
40. Eduar König, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament* (Leipzig: Dietrich, 1910).
41. Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti libros: A Dictionary of the Hebrew Old Testament in English and German* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1948–1953).
42. Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexicon zum Alten Testament* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967–1995).

of the Old Testament,[43] or *HALOT*. These all maintained that the Qal/Niphal of ברא was a homonym of the Piel form, or ברא III.[44] Lastly, the most recent of the lexica—and the first to attempt to include all known words that constitute Classical Hebrew—is David Clines's *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. For the entry ברא it follows very closely Koehler Baumgartner, grouping it with the lexica that split ברא Qal/Niphal and Piel into separate "roots" or homonyms.

This survey of the lexicographical understanding of the meanings of ברא has identified two different models—created almost simultaneously—that have been picked up and passed down through generations of lexica. The model that lists the glosses "to create" and "to cut" as homonyms has been more prevalent in recent decades, but the longevity of BDB continues to push for a polysemous understanding of these two meanings. Again, Clines's caution, cited above, should be taken into account. Though I am not claiming that lexicographers have been careless in their depictions of ברא, heavy dependence on certain older lexica may have significantly contributed to the specific model borrowed during the preparation of the newer dictionaries, which in turn have affected the arguments of recent contributors to the discussion.

Conclusion

The current investigation has attempted to shed some light on issues surrounding the ongoing discussion of ברא. Though its aim has not been to resolve the problem, it has provided two important points of consideration for further research: it has redefined the central questions at the core of the argument, and it has illustrated ways in which the lexica have influenced the debate. As the discussion stands now, scholars essentially continue to follow one of the two models developed well over a century ago. The influential lexicographers of that time interpreted the Qal/Niphal and the Piel of ברא to be either homonyms or polysemes, and the debate continues along the same lines to this day. Understanding the discussion in this way is an important step towards a possible resolution to the problem.

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43.   Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, translated and edited by M. E. J. Richardson, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994–2000).

44.   Note the addition of a fourth homonym under ברא to the German *HALAT* (1967). This consists of a single occurrence in 2 Sam 12:17 and is considered equivalent to ברא I, essen. The English *HALOT* also continued this tradition.

PROSKYNESIS IN THE SYNOPTICS: A TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF ΠΡΟΣΚΥΝΕΩ AND JESUS

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Introduction

The way Jesus was worshiped in the Gospels is an essential question in examining how the New Testament authors perceived Jesus and his supposed pre-Easter messianic identification. It is of little doubt that Jesus began to be worshiped within decades of his death, but the greater question is whether he was worshiped *before* his death, and how that influenced the perception of who Jesus was. In this paper I aim to analyze the usage of the Greek verb προσκυνέω, translated simply as "worship", and how the authors of the Gospels used it to identify Jesus as more than mortal. I will first seek to establish the historical context of προσκυνέω and the act of *proskynesis*, and then analyze the way each gospel author uses it to identify Jesus. It will be shown that each author uses προσκυνέω in different ways to establish Jesus's identity—as king, as the son of God, and as God himself. While gospel authors are likely retrojecting post-Easter Christology to the entirety of Jesus's ministry, it is useful to examine pre-Easter events and view them as the author eventually interpreted them. Not only will this allow us to understand how the gospel authors interpreted the worship of Jesus, but it will also let us understand how the authors believed these events *should* have been interpreted, possibly in their original context.

προσκυνέω in Context

First-century Palestine was created by several cultures that were assimilated, either by force or adoption, thus influencing Judaism and early Christianity at the time. Each culture's perception of *proskynesis* directly influences the way Judaism and the early Jesus movement interpreted the term.

Much of the scholarship on the topic of New Testament *proskynesis* has some-what ignored the term in its greater cultural context.[1] It is essential to evaluate προσκυνέω in three separate contexts in order to give an appropriate analysis of each gospel's use of the term: Hellenistic, Roman, and Jewish.

Etymology and Meaning

Προσκυνέω is a compound verb formed by the prefix προς- and the ε-contract verb κυνέω. Κυνέω, which generally carries the meaning of "to kiss," has etymologically also meant "to prostrate (oneself at), to kiss the ground, to honor by prostrating . . . also to throw kiss-hands."[2] Beekes further indicates that the compound προσκυνέω carries a religious or venerative quality as well.[3] Marti further concludes that the "original meaning would *a priori* seem to have been 'to worship' or 'to greet with a kiss.'"[4] The prefix προς-, then, would not only indicate the direction of the kiss, or to whom the prostration was directed, but it also seems to amplify the act of κυνέω with reverence and veneration. This effectively makes the one to whom *proskynesis* was given higher status than a mortal man, as only gods and kings were considered such.

One of the most important and enlightening contemporary sources at this time was Philo. Of the thirty-seven times Philo uses the verb προσκυνέω, he describes the act of *proskynesis* eleven times, all of which involved falling down, prostration, and a salutation.[5] It is also important to note that these usages of προσκυνέω are independent of any usage of προσπίπτω, which is often used to describe a falling down independent of προσκυνέω.

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1. Specifically Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity (*Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2008); James D. G. Dunn, *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus?: The New Testament Evidence* (Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), and Larry W. Hurtado, *How on Earth did Jesus Become a God?: Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005). Not one of these studies attempts to look at προσκυνέω in its greater historical context outside of the first century-Christian and Jewish world, missing much of how we should interpret the term as the New Testament authors use it. They simply give a brief analysis of the term, which is insufficient for understanding the full impact of προσκυνέω and the implications it has on the overall gospel narrative of Jesus.

2. Robert Beekes and Lucien van Beek, "κυνέω," *Etymological Dictionary of Greek* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 1:803.

3. Beekes and van Beek, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek,* 1:803.

4. Berthe M. Marti, "Proskynesis and Adorare," *Linguistic Society of America* 12:4 (1936): 273.

5. Philo, *Somn* 1.111, 133, 140; *Ios.* 6, 9, 164; *Mos.* 2.165; *Spec.* 1.15; *Spec.* 2.17; *Prov.* 2.19.

Greece

There are several key texts that are able to tell us not only what *proskynesis* entailed, but also how each author and his contemporaries interpreted it. It is important to note that the historicity of the accounts does not matter so much as *how* the author and his contemporaries interpreted and perceived what the term προσκυνέω meant. In his histories, Herodotus tells us how *proskynesis* was performed. In speaking of differences in rank he explains: "if the difference in rank be but little, it is the cheek that is kissed; if it be great, the humbler bows down and does obeisance to the other."[6] Although Herodotus is describing *proskynesis* within the context of Persian culture, it is safe to conclude that this description fits the Greek performance of *proskynesis* as well, albeit in a purely religious context. In another volume, Herodotus tells us of a group of Spartans who refused to perform the aforementioned obeisance to a Persian king:

> When the guards commanded and would have compelled them to fall down and do obeisance to the king, they said they would never do that, no not if they were thrust down headlong; for it was not their custom (said they) to do obeisance to mortal men, nor was that the purpose of their coming.[7]

Here Herodotus establishes the most importance aspect of the Grecian perception and interpretation of *proskynesis*: it was only befitting to perform toward the gods—beings who were not considered mortal. It is also important to note that Herodotus is careful to distinguish between προσπίπτω (to fall down) and προσκυνέω (to perform obeisance). In his study of *proskynesis,* Marti concludes that there mainly two different gestures of *proskynesis:* 1. a hand-kissing gesture and 2. a kneeling gesture[8]—Herodotus's description and careful explanation of the act of *proskynesis* seems to imply that reverence and worship are an inherent part of the act, not just a falling down that προσπίπτω would imply.

In Arrian's account of Alexander's attempt to introduce *proskynesis* in his court, he tells us of Callisthenes's disapproval and refusal to perform obeisance to Alexander. Arrian declares, "the most important distinction concerns the matter of obeisance. At greeting men receive a kiss, but what is divine…we

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6. Herodotus, Book I, 134. Note the usage of προσκυνέω: …ἤν δέ πολλῷ ᾖ οὕτερος ἀγεννέστερος, προσπίπτων προσκυνέει τόν ἕτερον.

7. Herodotus, Book VII, 136: "…πρῶτα μέν τῶν δορθφόρων κελςυόντων καί ἀνάγκην σφι προσφερόντων προσκυνέειν βασιλεά προσπίπτοντας, οὔκ ἔφασαν ὠθεόμενοι ὑπ᾽αὐτῶν ἐπί κεφαλήν ποιήσειν ταῦτα οὐδαμά. οὔτε γάρ σφίσι ἐν νόμῳ εἶναι ἄνθρωπον προσκυνέειν οὔτε κατά ταῦτα ἤκειν."

8. Marti, "Proskynesis and Adorare," 272.

are forbidden even to touch it, is for that very reason honored by obeisance."[9] This informs us of two ways in which Arrian also perceived the implication of the *proskynesis*: first, in the Greek mind, it is only appropriate to perform before the divine. Second, it substantiates the differences between the Persian and Greek *proskynesis,* but confirms that the *proskynesis* and obeisance were reserved for two groups of people: kings and gods. However, it is clear by Arrian's interpretation of the account, Alexander was trying to put himself at least on par with the gods—a term E. Badian calls ἰσόθεος, or equal to god.[10] Whatever Alexander's true claims were, this *proskynesis* was either meant to worship him as a god in the Greek mind or to venerate him as the Great King to the Persians.

In his *Anabasis*, Xenophon echoes this same sentiment, "for to no human creature do you pay homage as master, but to the gods alone."[11] Here Xenophon confirms that in the Greek mind, *proskynesis* is only fit for the gods. He further extends the context of the *proskynesis*: the only persons that can be perceived as masters are the ones worthy of homage and obeisance—the gods alone.

Additionally, Polybius gives us an account of Philip's cultic activity, that he went "to sacrifice and thus to sue for the favor of the god, worshiping and adoring most devoutly his tables and altars."[12] This gives further insight into the fact that aside from sacrifices, *proskynesis* was also an essential part of cultic worship. As the Greek Ruler cult was established, its function was also to sue for favors through sacrifices and worship of rulers who were, at least politically, perceived as gods.

From this brief survey of the Greek sources, we can reasonably conclude, like Lily Taylor, that *proskynesis,* in the Greek mind, carried with it the idea and act of worship of gods.[13] This interpretive framework of *proskynesis* directly affects the greater Hellenistic attitudes and usages of the verb προσκυνέω in Hellenistic culture in the first centuries BCE and CE, even in Second Temple Judaism and the roots of Christianity. Additionally, the Persian

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9. Arrian, IV.11

10. E. Badian, "Alexander the Great between two thrones and Heaven," in *Subject and Ruler: The Cult of the Ruler Power in Classical Antiquity* (ed. Alastair Small; vol. 17 of *Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplementary Series*, ed. P. Foss and J. H. Humphrey; Ann Arbor: Thomson-Shore, 1996), 22.

11. Xenophon, *Anabasis*, III.2.13

12. Polybius XXXII 15.4–7 "….τό γάρ ἅμα μέν θύειν καί διά τούτων ἐξιλάσκεσθαι τό θεῖον, προσκυνοῦντα καί λιπαροῦντα τάς τραπέζας καί τούς βωμούς ἐξάλλως…"

13. Lily Ross Taylor, "The 'Proskynesis' and the Hellenistic Ruler Cult," *JHS* 47:1 (1927): 53, 57.

idea of *proskynesis* before kings also directly affected Jesus's veneration and perception as the Son of David and Messiah.

Rome

Roman sources, then, are also extremely important to evaluate the context of προσκυνέω and cultic worship in the ancient Near East during the first-century CE

An important example is the *proskynesis* in relation to the Emperor Caligula. While the Roman Imperial Cult had already been established, at the outset of his reign, Caligula supposedly "forbade Romans from giving him even a formal greeting,"[14] let alone veneration through *proskynesis*. However, later on in Caligula's reign, *proskynesis* seems to have become a regular occurrence in relation to his own self-realized divinity and worship through the Imperial Cult,[15] especially in the account of Lucius Vitellius. Suetonius[16] gives the account of Lucius, who after his successful peace with Parthia and under general paranoia of Caligula, came to the emperor and prostrated himself before Caligula. Suetonius tells us that Lucius worshiped Caligula as a god and "he did not presume to approach the emperor except with veiled head, turning himself about and then prostrating himself."[17] Dio Cassius also recounts that during this event, Lucius Vitellius "arrayed himself in a manner beneath his rank, then fell at the emperor's feet with tears and lamentations, all the while calling him many divine names and paying him worship; and at last he vowed that if he were allowed to live he would offer sacrifice to him."[18] Dio was clearly using it only in reference to Caligula being seen as a god.

A more contemporary source of Caligula's self-realized divinity is found in Philo's *Embassy to Gaius*. Philo was part of an embassy sent from Alexandria to Rome to petition Caligula to secure the rights of Alexandrian Jews, who were suffering in civil strife with the Greeks.[19] While on this embassy, Caligula ap-

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14.   Anthony Barrett, *Caligula: The Corruption of Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 150.

15.   According to Gradel, the supposed divinity of the emperor was relative as opposed to absolute. However, included in any divine honors was sacrifice to the emperor. See Ittai Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 25–26, 91–97. Additionally, within the religious ritual of the imperial cult the proskynetic hand-kissing gesture was used, see Marti, "Proskynesis and Adorare," 279.

16.   Though Suetonius is a later Roman historian (70–130 CE), his interpretation is still relevant to this discussion because it provides us with a second-century source that shows that the older interpretation and cultural implications of proskynesis were maintained.

17.   Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars,* 7.3.2.5.

18.   Dio Cassius, *Roman History,* 59.27.4–6: "…καί θειάσας αὐτόν πολλά καί προσκυνήσας…".

19.   Josephus, *Ant.* 18.257–260; Philo, *On the Embassy to Gaius*, XXVII–XXXI.71–224.

parently ordered a "colossal statute of himself to be erected in the holy of holies, having his own name inscribed upon it with the title of Jupiter!"[20] The holy of holies was the spot where the God of the Jews resided—Caligula was attempting to effectively make himself the God of the Jews, and thus the subject of their obeisance and worship, of which *proskynesis* was included. Additionally, Philo, while appealing to Gaius, explains to him that Gaius's great-grandfather Augustus himself "marvel[ed] at and honour[ed] (προσεκύνει)" the temple.[21] Through Philo's account, we clearly see that Romans would have also interpreted the term προσκυνέω as an act of worship and obeisance. Taylor is completely correct when she states, "Philo does not critique the imperial cult, but rather the emperor Gaius because of his active—and insane—imposition of his divine veneration against the will of the people."[22]

The most convincing evidence of the Roman contextualization of προσκυνέω is found under both Herod the Great and Pontius Pilate's rule over Judaea. Taylor asserts, "Herod the Great instituted the imperial cult in Judaea."[23] This is clearly seen in the structures Herod built in Sebaste, Caesarea, and Panias devoted to the worship of Augustus: in Sebaste, the Augusteum,[24] in Caesarea the temple of Augustus,[25] and in Panias another temple to Augustus.[26] After Herod, Pilate continued to establish and promote the Roman Imperial Cult. Apparently, "Pilate's position carried within it a religious dimension . . . and the 'role of governor included supervision of religious matters along essentially *Roman* guidelines.'"[27] It was therefore part of Pilate's job as governor to encourage the honors due to the emperor.[28]

Ultimately, the perception of προσκυνέω remained the same in the Roman era as it was in the Greek. Proskynesis was only used in relation to royalty or to divine beings—whether it was a god or an emperor turned god. The

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20.   Philo, *Gaius*, XXIX.188.
21.   Philo, *Gaius*, XXXVIII.310: "…τό ἱερόν και ὅτι οὐδεν ἐστιν ἀφίδρθμα ἐν αὐτῷ χειρόχμητον, ὁρατόν ἀοράτου μίμημα φύσεως, ἐθαύμαζε καί προσεκύνει…"
22.   Joan E. Taylor, "Pontius Pilate and the Imperial Cult in Roman Judaea," *NTS* 52 (2006): 576.
23.   Taylor, "Pontius Pilate," 562.
24.   Ehud Netzer, *The Architecture of Herod the Great Builder* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 85–92; see also Philo, *Gaius*, 305.
25.   Netzer, *Herod the Great*, 103–106; see also Josephus, *Wars* 1.414.
26.   Netzer, *Herod the Great*, 218–222; see also Josephus, *Wars* 1.404–406; *Ant.* 15.363–364.
27.   Taylor, "Pontius Pilate," 556. Taylor's quote in this section is found in Mary Beart, John North, and Simon Price, Religions of Rome (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1998), 1:321.
28.   Taylor, "Pontius Pilate," 570.

near-contemporary evidence suggests that the Jesus movement would have also operated within this religious context.

Judaism

Judaism also seems to employ this same pattern of interpretation in regard to προσκυνέω. As contemporary and near-contemporary Jews with Jesus, Philo and Josephus provide us with the best insight of how προσκυνέω was used and to whom it was intended; the Septuagint (LXX) also provides us with great insight into προσκυνέω as well. These three sources provide the best context in which to evaluate προσκυνέω in the Jewish world in a Greco-Roman context.

In his works, Philo uses προσκυνέω thirty-seven times.[29] Of his thirty-seven uses, twenty are used in relation to divinity, fourteen to kings/royalty, and three miscellaneous uses. Josephus uses προσκυνέω ninety-eight times.[30] Of these ninety-eight uses, sixty are in relation to divinity, thirty-four to royalty, and four miscellaneous uses. Between Philo and Josephus, προσκυνέω is used 135 times, and of these 55 percent are used in relation to divinity, 40 percent to royalty, and a mere 5 percent of other uses. Προσκυνέω is undoubtedly used almost exclusively to royalty and divinity, and it is within this context that Matthew, Mark, and Luke are using προσκυνέω in their gospels.

Additionally, the LXX, which we will see influenced Matthew and Luke, uses προσκυνέω within these same boundaries—I will highlight six passages. 1 Kings 1:16 tells us that Bathsheba "bowed down and did obeisance (προσεκύνησεν) to the king"; 1 Chr 29:20 indicates, "and all the assembly blessed the Lord, the God of their ancestors, and bowed their heads and prostrated (προσεκύνησαν) themselves before the Lord and the king." Psalm 28:2[31] shows David's desire to "ascribe to the Lord the glory of his name; worship (προσκυνήσατε) the Lord in holy splendor," and Psalm 95:9[32] says, "worship (προσκυνήσατε) the Lord in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth." In the Apocrypha, Judith relates, "when they arrived at Jerusalem, they worshipped (προσεκύνησαν) God," and Sirach, "Then all the people together quickly fell to the ground on their faces to worship (προσκυνῆσαι) their Lord, the Almighty, God Most High." The LXX definitely carries the same perception

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29. See Appendix for Philo's uses of προσκυνέω between divinity, royalty, and other uses.

30. See Appendix for Josephus' uses of προσκυνέω between divinity, royal, and other uses.

31. Psalm 29:2 in the NRSV.

32. Psalm 96:9 in the NRSV.

of προσκυνέω as Philo and Josephus, further establishing the Jewish context in which the synoptic writers wrote.

Each of the four outlined contexts establishes the setting for the synoptic authors. *Proskynesis* was used almost uniquely for gods and kings, and the synoptic authors were certainly influenced by these implications of προσκυνέω, and they deliberately used προσκυνέω to show Jesus as both king and god.

προσκυνέω in the Synpotics

The synoptics use προσκυνέω eighteen times.[33] Mark uses it twice, Luke three times, and Matthew thirteen. Each author's use of προσκυνέω in relation to Jesus is extremely telling of his own perception not only who he believed Jesus was, but also how Jesus ought to be perceived by others.[34] Matthew appears to be extremely deliberate in his use of προσκυνέω, while Mark and Luke seem selective when they use the verb: they instead use verbs such as προσπίπτω and λατρεύω in relation to adoration, but not necessarily worship, of Jesus.[35] προσκυνέω to Mark and Luke seems to be reserved for extreme forms of worship, veneration, and adoration. Again, it is important to understand that these authors are retrojecting their post-resurrection perceptions of Jesus onto his pre-resurrection ministry showing how they believed the original events should be and should have been interpreted.

Mark's only two uses of προσκυνέω appear in the story of the Gerasense Demoniac (Mark 5:1–20) and the mocking of Jesus by Roman soldiers (15:19). Hurtado explains that Mark's selective use of προσκυνέω is due to Mark's use of irony in an attempt to underscore and emphasizes Jesus's true divine status.36 The only people who perform *proskynesis* in his gospel are considered to be evil: the demoniac and the abusive, crucifying Romans. Hurtado is quite right when he explains it in relation to the demoniac:

> It is almost inescapable that readers were intended to see in this dramatic scene a transparent anticipation of their own deliverance from evil, and in the uncanny recognition of Jesus's true status a prefiguring and confirmation of their own confessional claim and their devotional practice.[37]

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33. John uses προσκυνέω eleven times (4:20–24; 9:38; 12:20). Due to the narrow scope of this paper, only the synoptics have been considered in the analysis of προσκυνέω; however, John should certainly be considered in a larger analysis of the term in the Gospels and New Testament.

34. I disagree with Bauckham's observation that "in Mark and Luke the gesture of obeisance to Jesus is probably no more than a mark of respect for an honored teacher." Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 131. I believe that each author is using προσκυνέω to represent their views of the divine Jesus and that they are very aware of the religious implications of using a word such as προσκυνέω.

35. Dunn, *First Christians*, 12–22.

36. Hurtado, *How on Earth*, 144.

37. Hurtado, *How on Earth*, 144.

In Mark's portrayal of the Roman soldiers worshiping Jesus, Mark is also showing Jesus's divine messianic status. The irony is that while the soldiers are mocking Jesus as King and god, Mark is underscoring the fact that Jesus *is* King and god.[38] Mark's use of demoniac powers correctly worshiping Jesus is an attempt to convince his audience of Jesus's true status, albeit through ironic means, as Messiah. This would have effectually heightened the reader's response to Mark's claim of Jesus being King and god by illustrating the correct way to worship and give honor to Jesus.

Luke is equally selective in using προσκυνέω, but in a much different way. Luke's three uses of προσκυνέω are all in relation to the worship of God. Luke uses it twice in Jesus's temptation narrative (Luke 4:7–8)[39] and once in relation to the post-resurrected Jesus (25:52). In the temptation narrative, Satan portrays himself as the God of earth, offering Jesus glory and authority if Jesus worships (προσκυνήσις) him. In Jesus's response, Luke directly quotes the LXX from Deuteronomy 6:13. However, Luke deliberately changes φοβηθήση in Deuteronomy to προσκυνήσεις in what seems like an attempt to heighten the reverence due to God, and that only God is worthy of *proskynesis*. Luke then deliberately reserves using πορσκυνέω in relation to Jesus until after the resurrection. The disciples were only allowed by Luke to perform *proskynesis* to Jesus until after his visitation and their return to Jerusalem. This would seem to emphasize Luke's idea that Jesus did not become *fully* divine until *after* his resurrection. As noted earlier, Luke prefers to use a verb like προσπίπτω to show reverence given to Jesus during his ministry. Luke effectively "periodizes reverence given to Jesus, distinguishing between the period of Jesus's ministry and the 'post-Easter' period in the language that he uses to portray people's actions."[40] While Luke desires to portray Jesus as the son of God[41] throughout his narrative, he only sees Jesus as God after the resurrection. Luke, then, seems to highlight the fact that Jesus was only worthy to be worshiped as God until after he became immortal through his resurrection.

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38.   Hurtado, *How on Earth*, 145.

39.   It is important to highlight here that in both Q and the Gospel of Thomas, the only instances of πορσκυνέω are found in their temptation narratives. This is easily explained by the fact that Q and Thomas are only sayings documents, and do not contain the same type of commentary that Matthew, Mark, and Luke give us. See James M. Robinson, Paul Hoffman, and John S. Koppenborg, eds., *The Sayings Gospel Q in Greek and English: with Parallels from the Gospel of Mark and Thomas* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 81; Uwe-Karsten Plisch, *The Gospel of Thomas: Original Text with Commentary* (trans. Genie Schenke Robinson; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2008), 69.

40.   Hurtado, *How on Earth*, 143.

41.   We see this in his account of Jesus's baptism and genealogy in Luke 3:21–38, and in the last temptation of Jesus in an attempt to highlight Jesus's divine Sonship in Luke 4:9–13.

Matthew gives us the most comprehensive and overwhelming evidence of *proskynesis* given to Jesus. Of Matthew's thirteen uses of προσκυνέω, ten are used with Jesus as the object of *proskynesis*, the other three are used exactly the same as Luke (and the Q-sources) in the temptation sequence. Bauckham suggests that Matthew uses προσκυνέω "in a semi-technical way for the obeisance that is due to Jesus."[42] Matthew does not use προσκυνέω in connection with mockers or demons like Mark, and thus only uses it with people who genuinely seek help and worship Jesus.[43] Matthew uses προσκυνέω in connection to both Jesus as God and King. It will be helpful to group these usages together and analyze how Matthew uses προσκυνέω in reference to Jesus's role as both.

Matthew's infancy narrative is aimed at portraying Jesus as king to his audience. When the Magi come to Jerusalem, they inform Herod that they seek the king of the Jews, and that the purpose of the Magi's coming is "to worship (προσκυνήσας) him" (Matt. 2:2). Herod responds that he too wants to "worship (προσκυνήσω) him" (2:8) when the Magi find Jesus. When the Magi finally find Jesus in Bethlehem, they "worshiped (προσεκύνησαν) him" (2:11) as king of the Jews. Matthew's deliberate use of προσκυνέω is an attempt to establish royal status to Jesus, and to show to his audience that he is their rightful King to whom *proskynesis* should be performed.

The other ten uses in Matthew all relate to Jesus as a divine being, illustrating Matthew's emphasis of Jesus as God. Unlike Luke, Matthew saves Jesus's temptation of power and glory for the last trial—this puts Matthew's emphasis on Jesus as God and on *proskynesis* as something only fit for God, who serves also as the King and Lord of the world, illustrating προσκυνέω's dual nature. Like Luke, Matthew has Jesus directly quote Deuteronomy 6:13 from the LXX, and likewise deliberately replaces φοβέω with προσκυνέω.

Of the remaining eight uses of προσκυνέω, five refer to Jesus in a position of benefactor. Whether the cleansing of a leper (8:2), the raising of a ruler's daughter from the dead (9:18), the Canaanite woman's supplication for help (15:25), the parable of the unforgiving servant (18:26), or James and John's mother asking Jesus for a favor (20:20), Matthew uses all of these as examples of Jesus not just as a benefactor, but as *the* Benefactor—the only one who can perform the variety of mighty deeds necessary to give the people what they need because he is divine and he alone is worthy of supplication through *proskynesis.*

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42. Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 131.

43. Hurtado, *How on Earth*, 147; Günther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth, and Heinze Joachim Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1963), 229.

Matthew's remaining two uses of προσκυνέω are explicit references to the disciples worshiping Jesus as the Son of God and the resurrected Lord. Once Jesus enters the boat after walking on water, the disciples acknowledge him as the "Son of God" (14:33), and worship him as the divine Lord. Hurtado asserts, "both the Christian confession that Matthew ascribes to the disciples and his characterization of their reverence with the verb προσκυνέω combine to make the scene in 14:33 'an image of the congregation of the risen Lord.'"[44] In other words, Matthew is deliberately highlighting the disciples' worship of Jesus to show his audience not only who Jesus was, but also what the correct form of Jesus worship is. Matthew, like Luke, also uses προσκυνέω in relation to the disciples' worship of the resurrected Lord (28:9, 17). Matthew's perpetual use of προσκυνέω throughout his gospel is an attempt to show his audience who Matthew believed Jesus was throughout his entire ministry.

Matthew's final use of προσκυνέω perfectly frames his gospel with the temptation narrative as Jesus proclaims, after he is resurrected, "all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matt 28:18). Bauckham is absolutely correct when he explains that this "shows its appropriateness to Jesus, when the unique divine sovereignty over all things—which had not been the devil's to give—is given to Jesus by his Father, thereby including him in the unique identity to which alone προσκύνησις is due."[45] Matthew, then, is framing his gospel in a way to show Jesus as both God *and* King. Matthew is trying to show his audience that Jesus "is still accessible to the believing congregation"[46] and that reverence through *proskynesis*, implied by Matthew's use of προσκυνέω, allows Jesus to fulfill their petitions—this is what Hurtado calls "the characteristic setting in which the original readers themselves would have reverenced the risen Jesus as Lord."[47]

Conclusion

Each synoptic author is deliberately using προσκυνέω and the worship of Jesus to show whom each believed Jesus to be. Mark through his use of irony, Luke through his "periodization" of Jesus worship, and Matthew throughout Jesus's entire ministry. Each author clearly perceives Jesus as a divine being worthy of *proskynesis*, and each believes his respective audience should view

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44. Hurtado, *How on Earth*, 148.

45. Richard Bauckham, "The Throne of God and the Worship of Jesus," in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism* (ed. Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila, and Gladys S. Lewis; vol. 63 of *Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism,* ed. John J. Collins; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 68.

46. Bornkamm, Barth, and Held, *Tradition and Interpretation*, 229.

47. Hurtado, *How on Earth,* 148.

Jesus as such, especially in light of Jesus's post-Easter resurrection. While taking προσκυνέω in its greater historical context within the Greco-Roman and second temple worlds, it is much easier to see how προσκυνέω influences each author's perception of Jesus, how each wrote to his respective audience concerning Jesus's divine status, and how Jesus should be properly worshiped.

Appendix

Occurrences of προσκυνέω in Philo

Object of προσκυνέω	Divinity	Royalty	Other
On the Creation		83	
On the Giants	54		
On the Confusion of Tongues	49		
On Mating with the Preliminary Studies	104		
On Dreams	2.99, 132	2.7, 80, 89, 90, 111(x2), 113, 133, 140	
On Abraham			65
On Joseph		7–9, 164	
On the Life of Moses	1.276; 2.23, 265		2.40
The Decalogue	4, 64, 72, 76		
The Special Laws	1.15, 24; 2.199		4.17
On the Contemplative Life	9(x3)		
On Providence: Fragment II	20		
On the Embassy to Gaius; The First Part of the Treatise on Virtues	310		

Occurrences of προσκυνέω in Josephus

Object of προσκυνέω	Divinity	Royalty	Other
Antiquities	3.91; 4.137; 6.2(x2), 55, 154(x2); 7.95; 8.25, 118–119, 225, 227–228, 248, 271, 317(x2), 343; 9.11, 96, 98, 133, 135, 139, 255, 261, 267, 269; 10.29, 69, 213–214, 263; 11.3, 87, 131, 167, 331, 333(x3); 12.114; 13.54, 74; 20.49, 71, 164	2.11, 13; 6.240, 285, 302; 7.2, 114–115(x3), 187, 211, 250–251, 266, 268, 275, 330, 349, 254, 362, 381; 8.386; 11.209–210(x3), 230, 277; 20.28, 56, 65	1.335; 6.334; 8.331; 10.211
Wars	1.73; 2.341, 414, 444; 4.262, 324; 5.99, 381, 402; 6.123	2.360, 366, 380; 6.331	
Against Apion	1.239, 261		